

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. In a television system capable of selectively displaying
2 program input from a plurality of programming channels, a system
3 for enhanced programming channel-selection control, said system
4 comprising:

5 a selector for selecting the programming input to process
6 for display;

7 a timer for timing the amount of time each channel is
8 selected for display;

9 a database for recording channel-selection durations;

10 a processor in communication with the database for
11 periodically compiling a program selection control list, wherein
12 the program selection control list includes channels selected and
13 assigned weight values relative to other listed channels, said
14 weighted values calculated according to a pre-determined algorithm
15 from the channel-selection durations stored on the database.

1 2. The system of claim 1, wherein a higher weight value is
2 assigned to channels having greater timed viewing durations and
3 wherein the channels listed on the program selection control list
4 are listed beginning with the channel having the highest relative
5 weight value.

1 3. The system of claim 1, further comprising a viewer
2 preference profile.

1 4. The system of claim 3, wherein the viewer preference
2 profile comprises automatically generated viewer-preference
3 information.

1 5. The system of claim 3, wherein the processor generates an
2 adjusted program selection control list by applying information
3 stored on the viewer preference profile to the program selection
4 control list.

1 6. The system of claim 1, wherein the system is capable of
2 generating and storing a plurality of program selection control
3 lists.

1 7. The system of claim 6, wherein the processor determines
2 which of the program selection control lists to apply to the
3 channel selection process.

1 8. The system of claim 7, further comprising a clock for
2 determining the day and time, and wherein the processor uses clock
3 data as a factor in determining which program selection control
4 list to use.

1 9. The system of claim 7, wherein the processor uses viewer
2 identity as a factor in determining which program selection control
3 list to use.

1 10. The system of claim 1, wherein the selector uses the
2 program selection control list to determine which programming input
3 to select for display.

1 11. The system of claim 10, wherein the selector successively
2 uses a plurality of program selection control lists to determine
3 which programming input to select for display.

1 12. A method for enhancing channel selection in a television
2 system capable of displaying a program selected from a plurality of
3 available program channels, said method comprising:

4 maintaining a viewing-history record of the amount of
5 time each displayed program channel is displayed by the television
6 system;

7 ranking each displayed channel relative to the other
8 displayed channels according to the display time in the viewing-
9 history record; and

10 creating a program selection control list based on the
11 displayed channel ranking.

1 13. The method of claim 12, wherein the viewing-history
2 record also includes information relating to the time of day during
3 which the displayed program was displayed.

1 14. The method of claim 12, wherein the viewing-history
2 record also includes information relating to the day of the week
3 during which the displayed program was displayed.

1 15. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of creating a
2 program selection control list comprises creating a plurality of
3 program selection control lists.

1 16. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of
2 determining, upon receiving a control list invoke signal, the
3 appropriate program selection control list to use.

1 17. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of
2 updating the program selection control list.

1 18. The method of claim 17, further comprising the step of
2 creating a preference profile based on viewer input, the profile
3 containing an update mode selection, and wherein the program
4 selection control list is updated according to the selected update
5 mode.